



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of Maine*

100 Middle Street

(207) 780-3257

*6th Floor, East Tower
Portland, ME 04101*

*TTY (207) 780-3060
Fax (207) 780-3304
www.usdoj.gov/usao/me*

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Contact: Daniel J. Perry
Assistant U.S. Attorney
Tel: (207) 780-3257

**Leader of Cocaine Trafficking Conspiracy Receives
11+ Year Federal Sentence**

Portland, Maine: United States Attorney Paula D. Silsby announced that **Jeremy Mercier**, 25, of Minot, Maine was sentenced today in U.S. District Court to over 11 years in prison for his role in leading a cocaine trafficking conspiracy. U.S. District Court Judge George Z. Singal imposed the sentence following the defendant's guilty plea.

Mercier was arrested in January 2007. According to evidence introduced at the sentencing, Mercier was the leader of a group that trafficked cocaine, crack cocaine, and marijuana starting in 2004 and continuing throughout 2007 in the Lewiston, Maine area.

United States Attorney Paula Silsby said that the investigation that led to Mercier's conviction was conducted by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency (MDEA), the Lewiston Police Department, and other local law enforcement officers. U.S. Attorney Silsby stated that the increased trafficking of kilogram quantity levels of cocaine renders this conviction significant in that it sends a strong message that those who traffic such drugs in Maine will be prosecuted and face stiff penalties.

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